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EDITORIAL

Fantasy Modeling! Just what is it? Well, essentially, what we are trying to do with this publication is to service all the many interests of those of you who may feel slighted by the strictly military publications in the modeling field. They have, on the whole, turned up their noses at science fiction and fantasy enthusiasts and the romanticists who like their heroes larger than life and their heroines draped in impossible costumes. With the recent advent of books, films and television devoting large segments of their production to science fiction and fantasy, it was inevitable that the model makers would rapidly jump onto this band wagon.

In a way this has been easier for the metal figure makers than it has for the large plastic kit manufacturers. The initial costs of steel molds for extruded polystyrene are absolutely staggering and well into the six figure bracket, thus it is imperative that the manufacturers' guesstimates as to what the plastic modelers requirements are, will be extremely accurate or his business life will be short indeed. For the metal figure maker, on the other hand, the sculptor's master figure and the vulcanizing of a few centrifugal rubber molds basically represent all of his initial costs. The choice of metal alloy in which he casts the figures is entirely his own and will be reflected in the final retail price of the figures.

In one form or another the fantasy syndrome has been with us for years. Tolkien wrote much of *The Lord of the Rings* in the early 30's. Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard, the giants of the early part of this century, were preceded by Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. Stimulated by man's practical advances into outer space and culminating in his adventures on the moon, a sudden revival of interest in things fantastic gave birth to a spate of writers and film producers devoting their talents to this exciting field.

Although the film *Star Wars* really blew the cork out of the bottle, let us not forget that the TV series *Star Trek* has been around for quite a number of years and has created a giant fan club, referred to as "Trekkers" who devoted-

ly attend huge regional and national conventions.

The growth of this popular interest in the far out and bizarre quite naturally began to make its impression on a few sculptors of military miniatures and war game figures. For them it became quite a release from the strict confines of military research to create a Conan, John Carter of Mars or a Tarl Cabott of Gor with all their surrounding ladies, beasts and strange equipment. It was barely necessary to read the books to create a picture in the mind and translate it to figures. The modeler in turn who purchased their creations could give vent to his own imagination in painting them, spurred on by the many fine fantasy illustrations from the hands of such artists as Vallejo, Frazetta, the Brothers Hilderbrandt and Chris Achilleos. Fundamentally, the war gamers, and more specifically the role players, launched into this marvelous new world of colorful fantasy with unrestricted abandon. The military crowd at first looked upon all this furor with a certain benevolent tolerance. But, as the fantasy and sci-fi began to burgeon, they too became aware.

Whether you are a figure collector, painter, scratch builder, sculptor, war gamer, role player or diorama builder, you will find articles of interest by the best experts to be found. Although our title indicates that our main focus will be on the science fiction and fantasy worlds, we will certainly not exclude the military. After all, if you play a war game and you are Napoleon and you defeat Wellington at Waterloo, is this not the greatest fantasy of all? We will try to keep you abreast of everything new which is being produced in the way of figures, games, publications and artwork and we hope to bring you guest writers, modelers and artists in an effort to be of assistance in your own endeavors and to augment your general enjoyment of this fascinating hobby. We heartily solicit your comments, suggestions, questions and complaints which we hope will make it easier for us to bring you what you want to see in Fantasy Modeling.

PHILIP O. STEARNS



PHOTO PHILIP O. STEARNS

THE POPULAR IMAGERY OF BORIS VALLEJO

The artistry of a famous painter finds a third dimension in the miniature sculptures of Ray Rubin

By PHILIP O. STEARNS

The magnificent artwork of Boris Vallejo must by now be known to almost everyone with an interest in fantasy through his many book covers, calendars and posters. They have certainly been the inspiration for many modelers who have tried to recreate some of these images in some way or another. But the present happy association of this most talented artist with an equally talented sculptor of miniatures, Ray Rubin, has been a most propitious event for all in the fantasy modeling fraternity. The origins of this idea came from Boris himself when he and his agent made inquiries as to the best source for their recreation and production. His agent finally put the idea forward to Grenadier Models and Ray Rubin eagerly seized upon the idea. As the line is now produced, Boris maintains complete control over what subjects will be executed and has the final approval on the three dimensional

representation of them. With these conditions fulfilled, there has now begun a most happy and fruitful association between the artist and the sculptor with a yearly program of six subjects. This will provide the ardent fantasist with a most varied collection of subject matter and an exciting assemblage of weird beasts, glamorous lightly clad maidens and fiercely muscled warriors all of whom bear a striking resemblance to that devotee of pumping iron, Boris, who uses himself as a model for his heroes.

Ray Rubin, as many of us know, is in partnership with Andrew Chernak in the firm of Grenadier Models Inc. Ray was the originator of the original Squadron/Rubin line of miniatures when he was associated with Gerry Campbell's Squadron organization. However, the combination of the necessity of living in Detroit and the wide variety of sculpting talents which ranged

in quality from good to bad and were attributed to his name, were too much for him and he decided to return to the East. Here he met Andrew, a veteran of the Vietnamese war, who had been sculpting for such firms as Superior, Old Guard and others. They both decided that all their previous associations were unsatisfactory and that they should combine forces and thus Grenadier Models was born in 1975. They also mutually agreed at this time that the fantasy world was beginning to dominate the war games field and, although both sculptors had been producing other than gaming figures, they now decided to launch their main efforts in this direction. Ray's 90mm Jungle Maiden was an early example of the heroic proportions and complicated

The models of "Gracus The Centurian," (above) being admired by Boris Vallejos on the right.





Boris discusses miniature painting techniques with Philip Stearns.

PHOTO JOHN CLAYTON



A jungle princess created by Ray Rubin before the Vallejo contact.

PHOTO PHILIP STEARNS

Ray Rubin at work preparing the figure for "Demon In The Mirror."

costumery which he has so adroitly adapted to the subjects of Boris Vallejo's imagery. Ray felt that the larger scale collector figures were being overlooked by his company and that competitive firms were producing a variety of fantasy subjects very successfully. The approach of Vallejo's commercial agent presented a welcome opportunity for the birth of an exciting line about which he had been ruminating for some time.

The original figures are prepared in an epoxy putty on a basic wire armature. This epoxy sets hard in about an hour and various portions of the figures are gradually built up until the final details are applied. If at any time during the preparation a detail is found unsatisfactory, it is an easy matter to carve it off and redo it. When the epoxy figures are finalized the whole subject is packed and sent to Boris for his comments and approval. Any required adjustments are noted and the figures are sent back to Ray. Any changes are then made before the figure is first moulded in cold cure Sylestimer rubber master moulds. From these, the first hand-poured master white metal castings emerge and are then used to make the vulcanized rubber production moulds which will be used in the centrifugal casting machines. Boris Vallejo reenters the picture at this stage when he supplies the box art work which will also serve

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PHOTO PHILIP O. STEARNS

Ray Rubin's interpretation of two of Boris Vallejo's illustrations for book covers. On the left, "Demon In The Mirror," and on the right, "The Magic Goes Away."





PHOTO PHILIP O STEARNS

Andrew Chernak and Ray Rubin discuss the Vallejo figures.



PHOTO JOHN CLAYTON

SENSUAL, STARTLING, HUGHS OF THE IMAGINATION INTO WORDS.
OF BEAUTY, WONDER AND TERROR—BY THE LEGENDARY ILLUSTRATOR

THE FANTASTIC ART OF BORIS VALLEJO



PHOTO JOHN CLAYTON

as a coloring guide for the painting of the figures. Thus the close work between these two talented artists brings to the fantasy collector market a totally new scope in miniatures and one which will certainly provoke a new and widespread interest in this subject matter.

Since its inception they have been extraordinarily busy producing some of the most outstanding war game figures available today. Going from their own line of Wizards and Warriors they are now producing the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons as well as the Ga-

ma World Figures for T.S.R. Since the very beginning their casting machines have seldom been cool and their small but efficient staff turn out a volume of metal figures which staggers both the eye and the mind. They order casting metal by the tons every few weeks.

So far the line includes four of the six chosen subjects. The first, on our cover, is "The Primeval Princess" followed by "Gracus, The Centurion," "The Magic Goes Away" and "Demon In The Mirror" which will be followed shortly by "Nomads of Gor" and "The Space Guardian." In these 75mm figures there exists every element to assist the imagination in traveling to distant planets and times, to have beautiful women in totally varied costumes and social behavior and to recreate heroes of staggering proportions against fantastic beasts and enemies, all reproduced in miniature, three-dimensional form. This, then, must be the answer to almost all our fantasy dreams when two such creative people as Boris Vallejo and Ray Rubin render them visibly solid for our delectation. Our fervent plea to both of them must be: "Please, gentlemen, pray continue!" △



THE PLASTIC INDUSTRY STRIKES BACK

The space age has come to Hollywood in a big way but it's a long way from the theatre box office to the counter of a hobby store

By RICHARD K. REIHN

With the sensational success of *Star Wars* at the box office, it was inevitable that the plastics industry would dust off its own space programs to take advantage of all the excitement. Such colorful characters as Darth Vader and R2-D2 were bound to capture the imagination of the younger set and the toy manufacturers have found them profitable even after they paid their royalties to the producers of *Star Wars*. However, when it came to the spaceships, the plastics industry was and still is faced with a more difficult proposition.

Over the past 20 years, the plastic manufacturers have given rise to legions of modelers who must rate among the most spoiled segment of the entire hobby industry. Spoiled because they have long been accustomed to an incredible variety of material, most of it quite inexpensive—especially when one equates dollars spent against the time spent at assembling a moderately complex model. Indeed, even with only a moderate set of tools and the necessary experience, an advanced modeler can

turn a \$20.00 investment into weeks, even months of spare time activity. And that is hard to beat in any league.

With an abundance of kits on the market today, a few remember that the plastics industry did not have an easy time of it in the old days. Back in the '50s, the term "plastic" was also a euphemism for "cheap." But the experienced modelers who for a long time resisted going plastic and stuck to their balsa wood, are now men in their 40s and 50s and the majority of them haven't built a kit in many years.

Nor were the old-time plastics all that much of a bargain. Although some of the castings were quite well-detailed, the plastic was brittle and given to warp. Nor did it take kindly to paint.

Then, with the arrival of 1/72nd scale from England, came the battle cry for constant scale. Not that 1/72nd ever succeeded in becoming the only scale, still a certain amount of order did come into plastics manufacturing until the evened-off, so-called metric scales

The U.S.S. Enterprise of Star Trek fame, in a kit by AMT Lesny Products.

added a few new wrinkles. Meanwhile, tanks, guns and ships were also coming on in a big way. But here again it was back to square one where scale was concerned. The first three manufacturers to market tanks and guns provided us with merchandise made to a different scale. This, of course, was obviously a decision made by the boys in the sales and marketing departments, not by model makers. The rationale behind all this was to hook the consumer on their product. They were dreamers because none succeeded in marketing a sufficient variety of products to stay abreast of consumer demands.

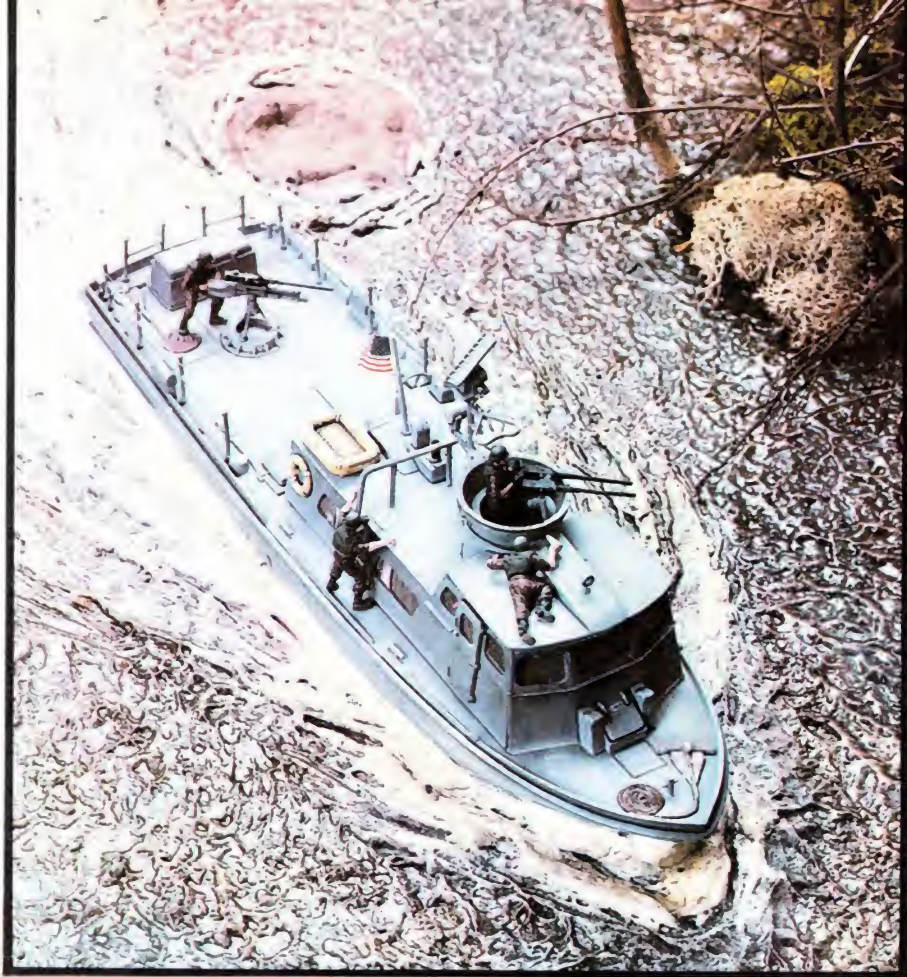
But these were merely teething troubles. We hadn't seen anything yet. Today, we still have a dozen different scales, but the variety of material available in the commonest of these is staggering. As a result, in two decades of growth, the plastics' industry has also created a demanding clientele for itself and plastics have become downright respectable.

At the core of this mass of kit builders,

which includes everyone from casual random buyers to dyed-in-the-wool hobbyists, stands the super-skilled kit-basher, converter and painter. By the very nature of his efforts, he is given to hairsplitting accuracy and the faithful reproduction of prototypes. And it is also his work which generally ends up on display in hundreds of hobby stores across the country, spurring thousands of others to emulate those efforts. He, and those who strive to imitate him, have achieved that happy state, where the expenditure of about \$20.00 for a couple of kits, together with left-overs from other kits, can keep them busy for weeks and even months on end.

These are the basic facts one must keep in mind as an outsider if one is to understand the remark about space sci-fi kits made by a New York hobby dealer. Picking up the Monogram kit of the Cylon Base Star, I asked "How are you doing with this?"

"We did great with it when the series began on television," he shrugged. "But like all the movie and TV stuff, it comes on like gang busters and then it just fizzles. This junk," he points at a stack of left-overs, "will lie around here.



PHOTOS: PHILIP O. STEARNS

A U.S. patrol boat in Vietnamese waters (above), superbly modeled by Ray Hapgood.

Bandai 1/35 scale tanks and Airfix figures in African desert diorama.



gathering dust until the end of the year."

"No staying power?" I asked.

"No," our dealer shook his head. "To begin with," he explained, "there is nothing to build. You can slap this thing together in five minutes flat. So it doesn't intrigue the modelers. Many bought these at first, because it was something new. But once the novelty wore off, it was just another white elephant."

Still I thought that the kids ought to go for these things in a big way. But the dealer didn't think so. He said that they "lacked both the attention span and the money. Besides," he waved his arm around to encompass all of his store, "this is a hobbyist's business. People often confuse the hobby industry with the toy business. They are two different things altogether. We may attract a lot of kids, but we do business with adults."

This reflects the feelings of many who did not yet see a space age in the hobby industry. There is nothing on the horizon which promises to have the staying power of something like the old Me-109, which has appeared on the



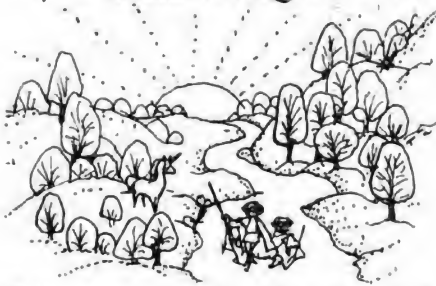
A Star Wars Millennium Falcon

lists of just about every manufacturer over the past 20 years and still continues to sell. But, then again, I can remember the times when the jets weren't all that popular either. Back in

the '50s and '60s, most of the modelers identified with the piston engine aircraft of their own youth. Now, an entire new generation of modelers has grown up who look upon piston engine prop



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The AMT Lesney Products kit of a Vulcan fighter from Star Trek.

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Where, then, do we stand as far as space age plastics is concerned?

Ever since the days of Revell's Moon Rocket, the plastics' industry has remained abreast of the state of space science right down to the Space Shuttle which is currently under development. However, in contrast to the constant multiplicity of new tanks, aircraft and other military hardware which continues to appear in an unending stream, space science doesn't move nearly quick enough to foster a strong nucleus of space modelers. This has left the field wide open for science fiction and fantasy to step into the breach. This has been a mixed blessing at best. Here much of what happens is, by its very nature, episodic and disconnected because too many minds are operating in too many directions and much is not readily adaptable for plastic modeling.

The first to provide any kind of continuity was the *Star Trek* series which also managed to gather a substantial and organized following. When the producers of the series, in quest of scripts, circulated a digest of data for prospective scriptwriters, they provided—probably quite unwittingly—a solid base for the cult of the Trekkies.

Those of us who have spent a great deal of our lives in the hobby industry have long learned that those subjects which flourish best are those which are supported by the most extensive literature. Thus, once the *Star Trek* data began to appear on the market, it became to Trekkies what the Bible is to Christians or the Oxford Dictionary is to English professors. Just as these kits were originally intended to furnish prospective script writers with the necessary background to produce compatible story material, so did they provide the Trekkies with fuel for their own imagination.

Since the days of *Star Trek*, sci-fi has gone sky high and *Star Wars* has even provided us with a bona fide box office blockbuster. But when *Empire* appeared some of the gloss seemed to have worn off. The lines were still long, but not what they were the first time around.

When it comes to continuity, as far as the modeling industry is concerned, things have been so-so. In *Star Wars*, we got a look at the awesome *Death Star* which promptly became a 'dead star' before it had a chance to receive the treatment accorded, for example, to the *Starship Enterprise*. Since then, television has come on with its own *Galactica* gadgetry and there is *Alien* and *Encounters*, to mention but a couple of noteworthy motion picture efforts.

We have not reached that stage where it has become sort of a one-upmanship game—like my monsters are more terrible than your monsters and we are at that juncture where we must attempt to decline finite terms like bizarre into bizarre, bizarrer, bizarrest. This may be a lot of fun for a movie-goer in quest of a couple of hours of diversion, but not for those who must abstract something rational from all this. And this the planners of the plastics industry must do, because the process from the concept to the marketing of a new product requires a substantial capital investment.

Thus, the \$64.00, or should I say \$200,000.00 question facing the producer is which of these wild men in Hollywood will produce something that will have a profitable impact at the point of sales? Which boxoffice lines will beget lines at the counters of the hobby shops? A flash in the pan may produce a fast buck. But it will be a far cry from such tried and proven old warhorses as the Me-109 or the Sherman

(continued on page 24)

We know all about you --

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This collage represents a fraction of the articles and pictures on miniature figures which have been featured in **Dragon's** last few issues. To see more, pick up a copy of **Dragon** at your favorite hobby store or book store, or write to Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.





ATLANTIS LIVES

2000 years of speculation about the existence of a lost continent present a fascinating subject for the diorama builder

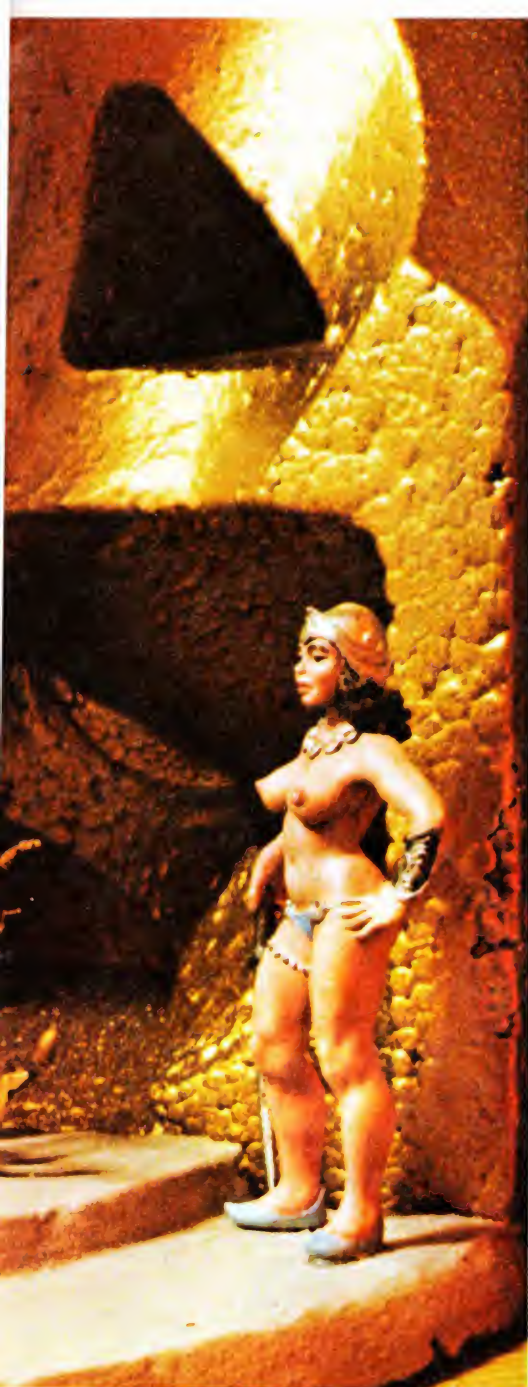
By PHILIP O. STEARNS

Several years ago Brian Marlow and Tim Richards of Phoenix Model Developments in England approached me with the first figures in their Atlantis line and asked somewhat tremulously if I thought they would sell. I have always been very keen on their products but this time I was wildly enthusiastic. They were still skeptical, but when the public's reception and sales matched my unqualified en-

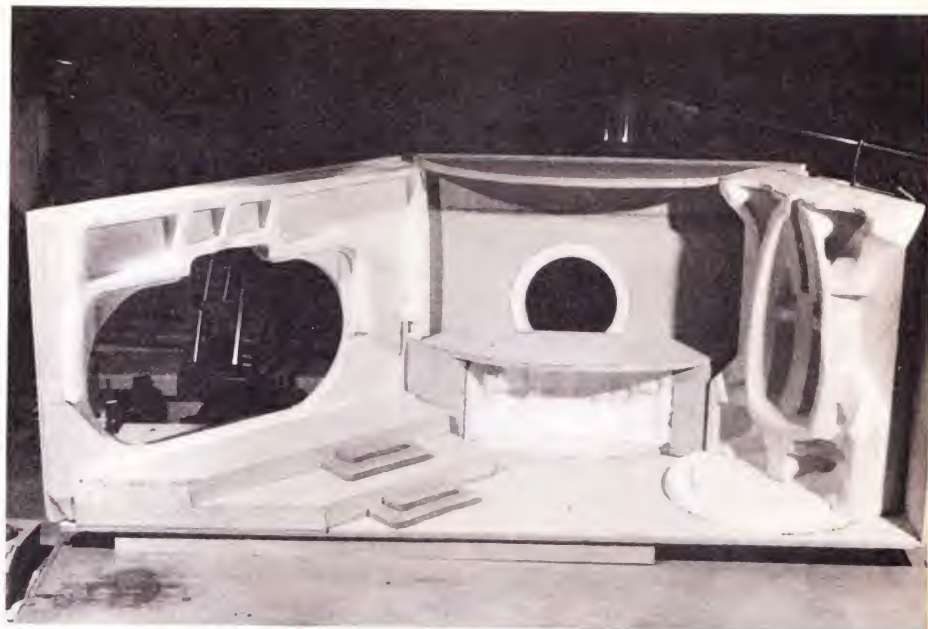
thusiasm, they continued to augment the production of this exquisite line of 60mm gems. When I had acquired at least 20 separate models and painted them, I began to ruminate as to just how I could assemble an Atlantis boxed diorama which would coordinate this beautiful mass of figures into a cohesive whole.

But where to start? I had been perusing the many splendid illustrative

books and calendars by such artists as Vallejo, Frazetta, Achilleos and the Hildebrandt brothers, but each time I found a suitable background, I paled with the staggering problems of creating the court of Atlantis. So I just kept postponing the project, seeking new inspiration. Then one day I returned home with a new vacuum cleaner. I opened the box and lo and behold, there lay my court of Atlantis among



(fig A) **The king on his throne is presented with a new slave by a Nubian envoy.**



(fig B) **Polystyrene packing of a vacuum cleaner used to create the Great Hall of Atlantis.**



(fig. C) **A princess observes the judgement of a captive warrior.**

the expanded polystyrene pieces of packing. These were absolutely perfect and I immediately plunged into production.(fig. B) The basic concept of the diorama included having a great hall containing an elaborate throne setting at one end(fig. E), a large viewing window looking out to sea at the other end (Fig B) and a second floor where the activities of a ladies toilette could be included. The diversity of action in the



The Atlantis Palace Great Hall, complete with all the figures in place.



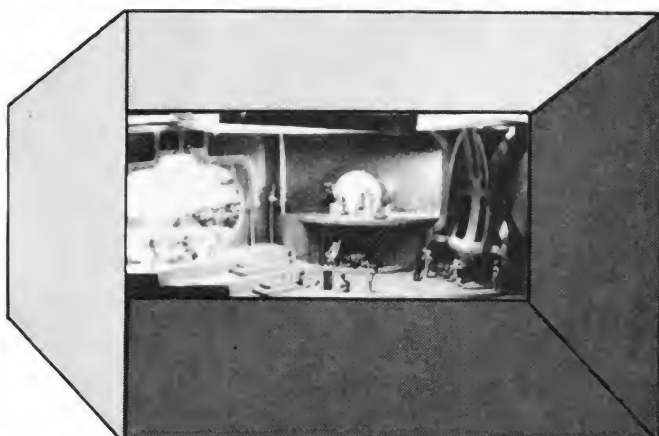
(fig E) An intruder surprises the palace guards.



(fig F) A princess at her toilette on the upper chamber of the palace.



(fig G) A dancer and her musicians entertain the court.



(fig. H) Illustration of the construction of the diorama's omitted baffle.

figures required that the setting be large enough not to have them getting in each other's way and that the movement flowed smoothly from one sphere to another. The diorama divided itself into five different action vignettes. On the right would be the throne with the seated King surrounded by his guards and attendants being presented with a new slave by a blackamoor (fig. A), (fig. D). In the front center stage the Prince and Princess would be passing judgement on a captive, (fig. G) while behind them, in the fluted alcove, a dancer and her musicians would be entertaining the court (fig G). At the far left, up a series of steps and in front of the large viewing window, a single enemy intruder would have penetrated into the court and would be summarily dealt with by the female guards including one with a trained tiger (fig E).

Above the musicians' alcove, in relatively little privacy, another Princess would be aided in her toilette by her attendants (fig. F). This was essentially to be the composition of the box.

Now for the method of assembling all these elements together. First the bottom cover of the vacuum packing formed a spectacular wall and window opening for the hall. (fig B) Next the backing for the throne was accomplished by

reversing and cementing together the two upper halves of the polystyrene packing. (fig B) The musicians alcove was made from a spare piece of packing which also provided an upper and lower level to the staging of the diorama. (fig B) Once the essential elements had been selected, the remaining parts of the background were built around them from sheets of textured plastic in various patterns of stone and brick backed by a light board. (fig 1) All the expanded polystyrene parts were filled and covered with DAP vinyl paste spackling compound before being painted. The wall area above the musicians' alcove invited puncturing for a rounded window. (fig 19A) as most of the polystyrene packing pieces were curved into a variety of flowing shapes, it was thought best to continue the whole in this vein. The elevation behind the throne, the elliptical concave and convexness of the alcove and the window openings all seemed natural to the setting of the mythical kingdom of the sea. (fig A) Once the whole stage had been assembled and painted, the time had come to prepare the backgrounds, the containing box and the lighting.

The backgrounds required quite a search but I was rescued by a splendid book published in England by Paper

Tiger Publications entitled *The Flight of Loamus*, from which I extracted a beautiful illustration which was suited exactly to the main window and I even found an adjoining one suitable for the circular window. These were backed with light cardboard for pliability and then secured in place. (fig D, E), (fig F) At the main window, a semi-circular piece of styrene was painted and inserted to indicate the surface of the sea and on its surface for sheer whimsy a sea serpent was added. (13A)

The containing box presented no problem but I made one mistake—which I'm happy to pass on to future diorama builders. The front cover of the box was incorporated by means of a piano hinge running along the top edge. This may appear to be a good idea, but the weight and size of this cover may stultify your efforts to work within the box and it is far better to make a separate frame which can be inserted or removed with little difficulty. Another of my own omissions which I now strongly recommend to all diorama builders is the inclusion of an interior, black-velvet-covered baffle between the exterior frame and the scene within the box. (Illustration) In most instances this will back the scene away from the interference of an exterior light and will make the controlled

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interior lighting far more effective. With this particular piece it was already so enormous that it was unrealistic to expand it one further inch.

The lighting of a diorama is really a case of examining the contents of the scene and applying a sense of logic as to the positioning of its source. In this particular case I felt that lighting should emanate from the exterior through the windows. This was accomplished by placing two 15-Watt fluorescent tubes directly above each of the windows so as to illuminate the backgrounds as strongly as possible and to reflect this light into the interior. For general, overall interior lighting, a third fluorescent tube was placed immediately above and next to the front opening but was strongly diffused by means of layers of thin paper taped to a translucent plastic sheet resting over the whole scene. A small 20-Watt spotlight was added to shine in from the opening on the right of the toilette vignette. Extraneous bits of light were finally baffled out with carefully placed pieces of black card. The diorama was now ready for final

accessorising and placement of figures.

I put the finishing touches on the Atlantean court with the help of some 30mm fantasy figures by Barry Minot, which I painted gold and distributed around the hall as statuary, columns and other accessories, including dry plants in vases.

At this point it might be of help to include a few technical details which may be of interest to modelers. All the figures which are metal were undercoated with Floquil R-9 primer. They were then finished using Windsor-Newton Artists oils. The scenery was airbrushed with a basic under coating of Humbrol oil-based paints and subsequently drybrushed with mixtures of Liquitex acrylic water-soluble paints. All gold and silver colors used on the figures were Rose Model Colors mixed with their medium while the gold of the scenery was a commercial spray paint. All elements including the figures were cemented with Biggs A + B Quick Drying Epoxy Paste and any modifications to the figures and scenery was done using Biggs A + B Epoxy Putty.

The smaller boxed diorama, *The Initiation*, was constructed along similar lines with the exception of the lighting. I had just discovered the many varieties of Doll House electrics and decided to try and incorporate some of these into the diorama despite the discrepancies in scale. For a dungeon scene, the wall sconces and candelabra fitted admirably into the established mood. For the outside lighting I used an ordinary blue candle light bulb. The doll house 12 Volt direct lighting required a transformer, while the candlelight bulb did not. I placed a dimmer switch to the main line giving me full control of the mood in the scene (fig. K). The figures for this presentation included two new releases from Phoenix and another from Cliff Sanderson as well as some repeats from the large diorama.

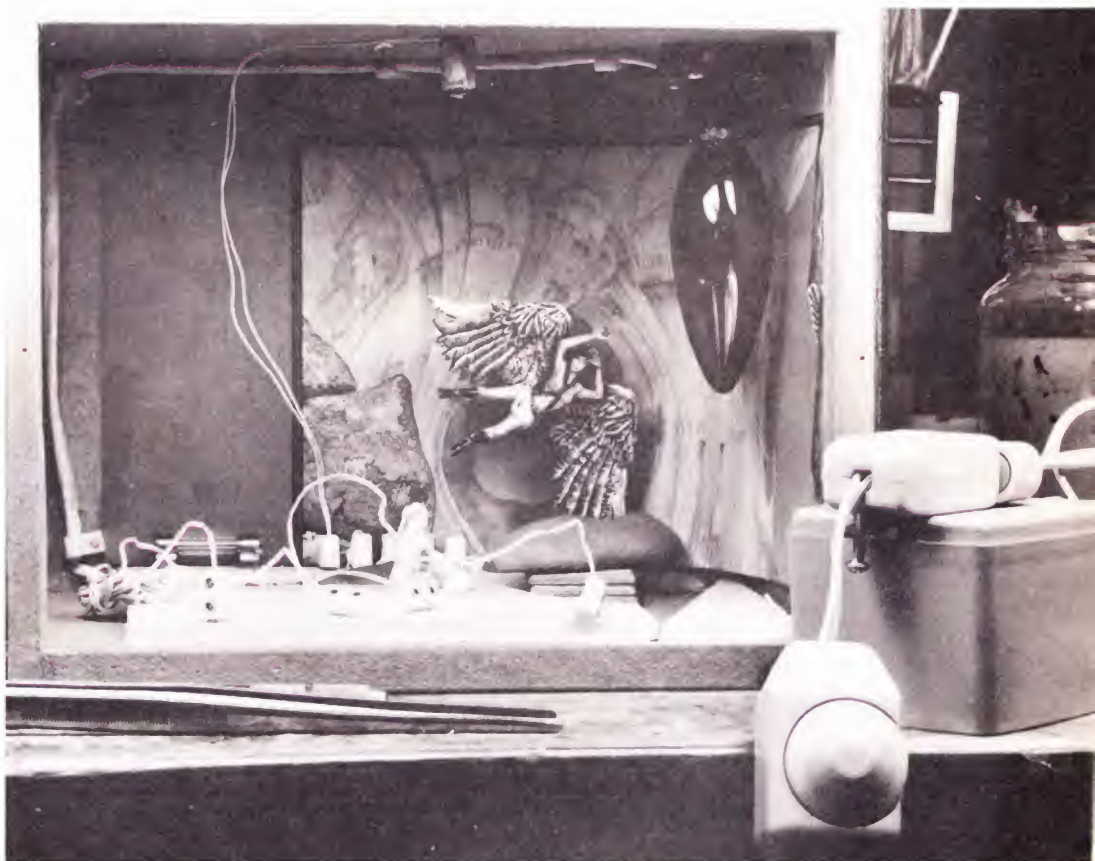
I feel that in building an imaginative diorama with a little bit of applied effort and thinking you can create a splendid world of fantasy which will give you hours of pleasure in assembling and many more in its enjoyment. Δ



(Fig 1) **The interrogation of a captive in chains by the Prince of Atlantis.**



(Fig J) The court initiation ceremony of an Atlantean maiden.



(Fig K) The interior of the diorama, showing the lighting and the convertor and dimming switch on the right.

Plastic Industry

(Continued from page 16)

Tank who have remained on the active lists for decades. And, when it comes to production costs, let us not forget that no manufacturer ever had to pay a royalty to any government for the right to reproduce its hardware in miniature. But you sure have to pay the producers of all this sci-fi.

So far, the only rationally developed scheme on a space fantasy level has been Superior's Starfleet. Owing to the lower cost of producing small scale metal castings, they were able to do this. Still, Superior developed an entire Starfleet representing five different civilizations each with a multiplicity of related and integrated types. And, interestingly enough, the *Empire* fleets which have replaced the *Death Star* or *Star Wars* bear a striking resemblance to the Terran models of the Superior Starfleet.

I make no claim as to who came first or if these were the result of independent evolutions. But I do say that they bear a striking resemblance to each other amid an ocean of bizarre gadgetry. Perhaps there is something there from which a rational concept of deep spacers may evolve.

At this point, however, only one thing is certain: The space efforts of the plastics industry have been as spasmodic and episodic as the impulses which stood at the inception of the sci-fi sagas. As far as the future is concerned, I see no immediate promise of anything that might encourage the plastics' industry to make any major investments beyond the sporadic impulses as they emanate from sci-fi as propagated by motion pictures and television.

Taken collectively, the plot of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* can be set down on a 3" by 5" file card. Apart from the *Millennium Falcon*



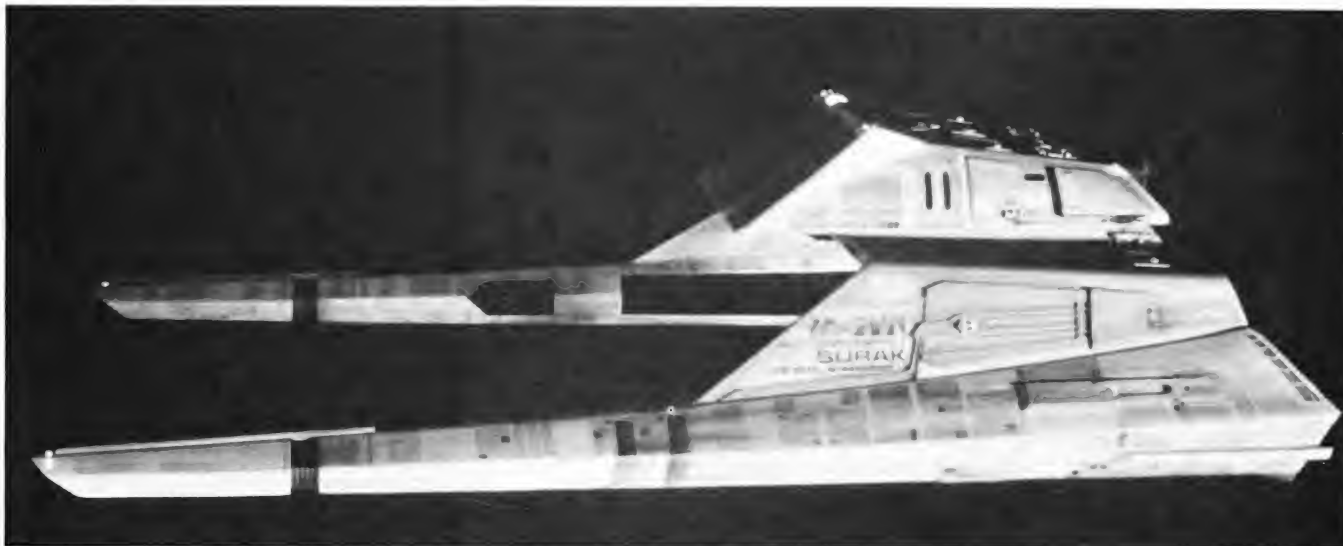
PHOTO: PHILIP O. STEARNS

This beautiful Japanese pagoda is by award-winning Frank Cronican.

(which has also spawned one of the best Tank who have remained on the active plastic kits so far—by MPC), the producers continue to rely heavily on an unending stream of outlandish gadgetry to assault our eyes and ears. It's here today and gone tomorrow. None of it hangs around long enough to make a lasting impact. And, of course, those sci-fi producers who do attempt to present meaningful plots also feel called upon to present us with their own brand of often technically unintelligible whiz-bangs.

All of this is fun at about \$2.50 an hour. But the modeling fraternity which has stood at the base of the plastic industry's commercial success has been weaned on a different set of

rules. Accustomed to an orderly Universe, where one attempts to create faithful interpretations of prototypes, all they see when they look at sci-fi is chaos. Until the state of space science produces its own orderly evolution, we will always have hundreds of idea men going off in a thousand different directions. Exciting? Certainly! But if you sit in the front office of a plastic's firm, responsible to your stockholders and trying to divine which of these thousand directions will sell a million kits, then you will quickly acquire a new perspective of the universe. Long lines at the box office will not necessarily transplant themselves into the hobby stores and the odds in favor of making a bad choice can be staggering. △



Another Star Trek kit from Lesney of an enemy Klingon cruiser.

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PHOTO LANE STEWART



This Chasseur à Cheval by Ray Lamb (left) is one of the finest 54 mm Historex ever assembled and was insured for 1,000 pounds by its owner. This remarkable diorama (above) by the creator of the Historex figures, Eugene Lelievrepre, depicts the Battle of Texel, when the French Hussards attacked the ice-bound enemy fleet. Another diorama (overleaf) from the Lelievrepre father and son team, of Napoleon reviewing his Guard Troops in the Tuilleries Garden. Above left is the Bordelle Militaire de Campagne, modeled by Lane Stewart.



PHOTO: PHILIP O. STEARNS

THE MILITARY CORNER

Historex walks new paths and finally gets around to other than Napoleonic troops

By RICHARD K. REIHN

The hottest news in military miniatures to come along in some time belongs to Historex.

Over the years we have all observed the steady growth of this magnificent line of plastic soldiers into the uncontested heavyweight champion of the Napoleonic Era. Apart from the fact that the precision-crafted steel molds spew forth parts with unvarying accuracy, which makes kit bashing and conversion a sport rather than a chore.

Historex has always been distinguished by impeccable research supporting its emissions. The only trouble I ever had putting together a Historex casting was with the trombone player of the band. And this was not the result of poor workmanship on the part of their technicians but rather due to the fact that, for once, they had looked into the wrong horse's mouth for an answer. The painting which stood at the cradle of the band's inception was probably

the parade of the Old Guard done by Bellange in 1862. That was long before photography became a household tool. Obviously, Bellange had no idea how a trombone player held his instrument. And if he used a life model, he didn't either. Nor did the men at Historex or, for that matter, probably 99 out of a 100 hobbyists who put together the model. All in all, not nearly enough to give Historex bad marks.

Now, we are entering a new era. After



PHOTO PHILIP O. STEARNS





An incredible conversion by Ray Anderson created the Consecration of John of Gaunt out of Historex parts.

the Inniskilling Dragoons, Historex is beginning to take a real stab at non-French material—and long overdue it is! The next question is: Will the Historex reputation hold up or will we get a

dose of 'laissez faire'? These are the thoughts in my mind as I look at the new "Converters Pack No. 1," subtitled "Movements."

The bulk of the kit is made up of sev-

eral different sets of arms, legs and bodies, as can be seen in the accompanying illustrations. The instruction sheet, however, does not by any means exhaust the possibilities to which these parts might be used. Some of the bodies, for example, are cut on a bias at the waist, lending themselves to mounted men leaning forward (galloping, charging) or backward (reining in or parrying) in the saddle. We have here the beginnings of entirely new vistas opening up for the collector/hobbyist of average skills. So far, so good. Now we come to the part that worries me.

The packet also includes a sampling of long awaited headgear: A British Waterloo shako, a Prussian shako with waxcloth cover (the accompanying cypher can be used for a full dress, uncovered shako), a Bavarian and a Russian helmet which can be done up in several different ways.

Before I get to the matter of the illustrations on the bottom of the instruction sheet, I must pose the \$64 question: Are these an *ad hoc* throw-in *ad interim*, or are they to be marketed in this fashion? In view of the fact that most retailers are loath to stock parts, this would be a *faux pas* of the first order. I should think that a modeller wanting three of any of these helmets, for want of figures to go along with them, would be asked to pay a rather stiff three times \$6.95 for the privilege. I



Contents of the first Historex conversion pack.



anxiously await an answer to this question.

Now to the text describing the four helmets shown on the bottom of the illustration inserted in the No. 1 pocket.

Anyone who has, over the years, attempted to model troops of the Rhine Confederation as well as Napoleon's opponents, will stand up and cheer with the appearance of these helmets. However, I would caution those who are not firmly in the saddle on these subjects to check their sources and proceed with care. The legends describing these helmets (with the exception of the Hessian, which would require some careful conversion work) are not wrong but they are rather simplistic.

This is not the place to go into the details on these helmets, which could fill a book. But I can give you some general guidelines. Reading from left to right:

1. The Bavarian M1801 is okay for Bavarian infantrymen. For officers, from 1805 onward, the plume must be

Diagrammatic illustrations in the conversion pack illustrate the possibilities.

thickened to something like half again its diameter. For Baden, use it only for Artillery and dragoons before 1813. For Nassau (not listed) Battalion v. Todenwarth from 1803 to the formation of the 1st and 2nd Nassau Line Regiments, where it was worn only by the grenadier companies until about 1809/10. It did not go to Spain. In order to make it suitable for Baden infantry, the caterpillar should sit on a small comb (see, for example, the Hourtoulle Plates Nos. 45/46).

2. This is the Russian cuirassier model as originally introduced in 1803 with the woollen caterpillar, which was soon (1805?) replaced by the type shown in No. 4.

3. Don't attempt to do Wuerttembergers, unless you have adequate research material. Like the Baden

cavalry, most of these helmets are merely similar and lower in the crown. Another silhouette altogether! They are more like Rumford Casquettes on which the horse hair was replaced with a caterpillar.

4. This is the Russian model as it was worn from about 1805 onward and as it was adopted by the Prussians in 1808/09. This version, with the horse-hair comb, underwent various mutations during post-Napoleonic years. Most notably, the comb grew steadily higher, with the overhang in front coming down almost to the visor. It remained on service in Prussia until 1843 and in Russia until 1846, at which times both were replaced by the familiar Prussian spiked helmets.

Congratulations to Historex for these long-awaited additions to their line. But at the same time, I wish to express the sincere hope that in doing the non-French material, they don't fall into the trap like Bellange's trombone player! Δ

ORIGINS '80

And they said it wouldn't last! Impressions from the 1980 National Wargamers convention

By GLORIA MICELI

Yes, they said it wouldn't last but Origins '80, the *sixth* consecutive Origins, was the biggest and best ever. Over 4,600 people milled about the dealers' area, buying, playing and painting the weekend away. The dealer's area was crowded with tables, probably to accommodate vendors who waited until the last minute to acquire table space. Registration for the event was well organized and, for the most part, the wait to get in was minimal.

The overall success of the show can be attributed to Tom Fillmore, John

Corradin, Bob and Mary Jo Frantz, Shawn Carroll, Tom Carroll, Al and Ester Hartman, Omar DeWitt, Bob Beattie, Dick Bryant, Jay Hadley and an army of workers and volunteers who keep the show running smoothly.

Highlights of the convention were the many fantasy, science fiction and role-playing events, and gaming seminars scheduled during the weekend. Bob Beattie ran a very successful event called "The Creature That Ate Chester" (Sheboygan). I'm happy to report that for the first time the humans won out and defeated the dreaded

creature! Another interesting highlight of the show was the painting competition. The judges were Joe Miceli, Philip O. Stearns, Charles Sweet and Jay Hadley, all well-known, accomplished artists themselves. The awards for the various categories were:

Best Fantasy

Unit STEVE ALEO

Best Fantasy

Army MIKE BARBAROS

Best Role Playing

Figure STEVE ALEO

Ral Partha Cup ROB MOSCA

Minifigs Award ERIC RITCHIE

Incidentally, Mike Barbaros (sic) had an exceptionally well-painted dragon included in his award winning army. Well done Mike! The H.G. Wells Awards were also presented. These awards are voted upon by the people who attended the convention. The popular choices were:

Best Fantasy/Science

Fiction Figure

Series . . . *Ral Partha Collectables*
by Ral Partha, Inc.

Best Role Playing

Rules, 1979 . . *Commando* by SPI

Best Role Playing

Adventure Game, 1979 . . *Kinunir*
by Game Designer's Workshop

Best Role Playing

Magazine *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society*



Duke Siegfried of Heritage Models conducts a painting seminar.



The ancient 25 mm. competition rages on.

The Charles Roberts Award for the Best 20th Century Game, 1979 went to *City Fight* by SPI and the Best Fantasy/Science Fiction Game, 1979 went to *The Creature That Ate Sheboygan* also produced by SPI. The names of the winners of the tournaments and other events have not yet been released and will appear at a later date.

While walking through the dealers' area, I noticed some exceptional figures and accessories for sale that Fantasy enthusiasts should make a point of adding to their collections. Ral Partha has put out a line of Fantasy 15mm figures (yes, I said 15mm) that have detail and quality equal to any 54mm figure on the market today! There are over 20 figures in this line, including Man-Orcs and elves where you can actually see the eye-detailing, etc. If you know anything about figures, this is no small feat. *Dragontooth Miniature* by Tom

Cliff Sanderson's evil Witch for Monarch Miniatures.



Pegasus and rider by Ral Partha.



A Ral Partha dragon painted by Joe Miceli.



Best painted Byzantine unit, Ral Pratha.

Loback has released some new figures including a devil figure that will really make you sit up and take notice, four new personality figures and a beautiful giant, all of which are selling like crazy! Steve Tofano designs the most attractive Fantasy belt buckles—real conversation pieces—and his Fantasy Throne is a work of art. Be sure to look for him at upcoming shows! Minifigs was featuring The World of Greyhawk line. There are approximately 60 figures in this line. One item that caught my attention was the Dragonnel & Lancer, which is an elf-type figure mounted on a winged dragon. Duke Siefried of Heritage displayed some pre-fab, build-it-yourself

castles and dungeons that add a touch of realism to fantasy games. Every fantasy collection should have one. Johansen Miniatures offers some really nice science-fiction figures and a dragon ring, which at \$5.00, is a real bargain! Archive Miniatures was another stop I made. Containing over 60 figures, the line features anything from a samurai to some wicked-looking Orcs. Grenadier's Warriors & Warlocks' 25mm fantasy figures are also good buys. If variety is what you're looking for, then try Citadel Miniatures where you can get anything from a Slime Beast with Sword to a Dungeon and all the accessories! Chaosium is

another company worth looking for, where something new is always being featured.

All together, there are close to 5,000 different fantasy figures and fantasy-related items available and I think *that* is a modest estimate. If all the manufacturers keep expanding their lines, someday the Origins convention will have to be extended to a week, just to see it all!

Origins '81 will be held in California at the Hotel Dunfey which is near San Mateo. The hotel itself resembles a medieval castle. The service is great and the rates are very reasonable. Try not to miss it. Δ

KIT BASHING SPACESHIPS

Rick Overton, spaceship designer extraordinaire, creates junk in space from leftover tank, truck and aircraft kits

By RICHARD K. REIHN

There used to be a *bon mot* going around to the effect that 'jumping off the Empire State Building isn't all that much of a problem. But watch out for that first step!'

That's the way things have been with the Space Age. Its first stages have been and still are dominated by the concepts of escape velocity and re-entry. The difference in energy required to transport a one-ton payload a distance of 10 miles along the ground from moving that same load 10 miles straight up is mind-boggling. If you want to visualize it, just put the engine and gas tank of a one-ton panel truck next to the power plant of one of NASA's first stage rockets. It gives you an idea of just how firm a grip good old *terra firma* has on the seats of our space suits.

The result of all this, of course, is that the imagination of most Earthbound dreamers still revolves around the bullet-shaped objects hurtling through the atmosphere at multiple Mach speeds. But times are changing. Now that we have seen capsules docking in space, putting together a laboratory that we could not yet have taken up all in one trip, the fantasies of the visionaries have gone into high gear.

One of these visionaries is Rick Overton, a young writer/comedian who takes his spaceships quite seriously. No doubt in reaction to the streamlined symmetry of sub-orbital flying machines, Rick is quite quick to explain "I love assymetry. I resort to it whenever I can with good reason." This is what his work is all about: reason. "I don't just slap together parts to make something outrageous," he explains.

Of course, most modelers already got the message that different rules apply in that void we call space when they saw pictures of the first satellites which are now orbiting the Earth by the dozen. Especially the huge grid antennae of the solar power packs make that point. If you were to mount one of them on the roof of the family car, it would probably get knocked down by the air resistance long before you reached 70

miles an hour. Or, if it was built with sufficient strength, you would never get the old tin Lizzy up to 70 m.p.h. in the first place. But there is no wind resistance out there in space. Mass and inertia, yes. But no air.

As little as 25 years ago, science fiction still wallowed in the backwaters of the publishing world and only a few isolated voices like, for example, Willy Ley, attempted to give us a view of what spaceships and space stations of the future might actually look like. Indeed, in those good old days, real science fiction put far greater emphasis on the 'science' than on the 'fiction.' The fiction was pretty much material for the pulp publications. Since then, these isolated voices have become a chorus which has propelled science fiction into the forefront of what's happening. In the motion picture industry it was, for a long time, the other way around. Relegated to 'B' and 'C' productions, it was the pulp which made it onto the celluloid most frequently. More often than not, we got the feeling we were looking at mechanized horse operas, where the cowboys wore funny suits (mostly left overs from *Ben Hur* and *Crusaders*) jazzed up with ray guns and goggles. But, like the old B's and C's, it is fun on a monumental scale.

Rick Overton, too, seems to be torn between the functional and the visual, between the visual and the outrageous. But that's what the business of designing spaceships is all about. Nobody has actually gone and built a deep-spacer yet. On that, we're still in the Sputnik age. But who knows when the time will come? At 25, Rick is still young enough to see some important developments come along in his lifetime. At the rate he's going, he may very well achieve that ultimate satisfaction of being able to say "I built one just like that over 40 years ago. You see. I told you so!" Meanwhile, he is covering his bets to shorten the odds.

Like many space modelers, Rick started out by building conventional aircraft kits before going into orbit. And

there, he quickly learned that kitbashing and converting, a sport for airplane and tank modelers, was a necessity of life.

"There just isn't enough variety," he explains. "But then again," he shrugs, "when I put my models together, I do the same thing they do when they assemble their masters. I use parts from other kits. These," he says, picking up one of the industry creations, "are bogeys from a tank."

From there he goes on to identify the sources for all kinds of details, ending with a radar dish antenna. "These are always a good number," he says, "because they can serve a great variety of purposes." Radar, microwave, gun laying equipment or laser guns to name a few. With a few minor modifications there is no end to their possibilities.

Parts from other kits are not Rick's only source of building supplies. "I use anything that looks right for the effect I'm trying to achieve, including ping pong balls, parts of sun glasses—even shampoo bottles," he grins. "They come in a great variety of sizes and shapes."

Rick has explored other sources of raw materials with great success. Apart from the Plastruct shapes, already well known to model railroaders, there are some businesses which handle industrial plastics. "I found one such place on Canal Street in New York," Rick explains, warming to the subject. "They have a great variety of shapes you don't see anywhere else. And don't forget your plain, ordinary hardware store. You never know what you're going to find there."

Like everyone else, Rick has his favorite modelers whose work and ideas spur his own creative efforts. With him, it is men like Grant McCune, Brian Johnson and Martin Bower. They frequently send him off on inner space trips of his own, in quest of new materials and new inspirations. "But I

Overton's derelict space tanker orbits an alien planet in a distant galaxy.



can never be sure," he says, "which will come first. Sometimes I start looking for some specific shapes only to have some unexpected shapes find me. The shampoo bottle was one of those occasions. It just sat there, waiting for me to take notice of it. When I did, I had my next spaceship."

That finally brought up the matter of scale which is a primary concern of any modeler worth his salt.

It was GHQ armor that gave Rick Overton his first set of parameters. "I use the GHQ tanks and the men that come with them as a starting point. From there, I determine what type of ship I am going to design and how many decks it is to have. Then, everything else falls into place. Of course, this scale works only for the two smaller types of craft; scouts, fighters, destroyers, that sort of thing. Perhaps, even for the smaller cruisers."

To get a feeling of what Rick was talking about, I translated GHQ's 1/285th



PHOTO JOHN CLAYTON

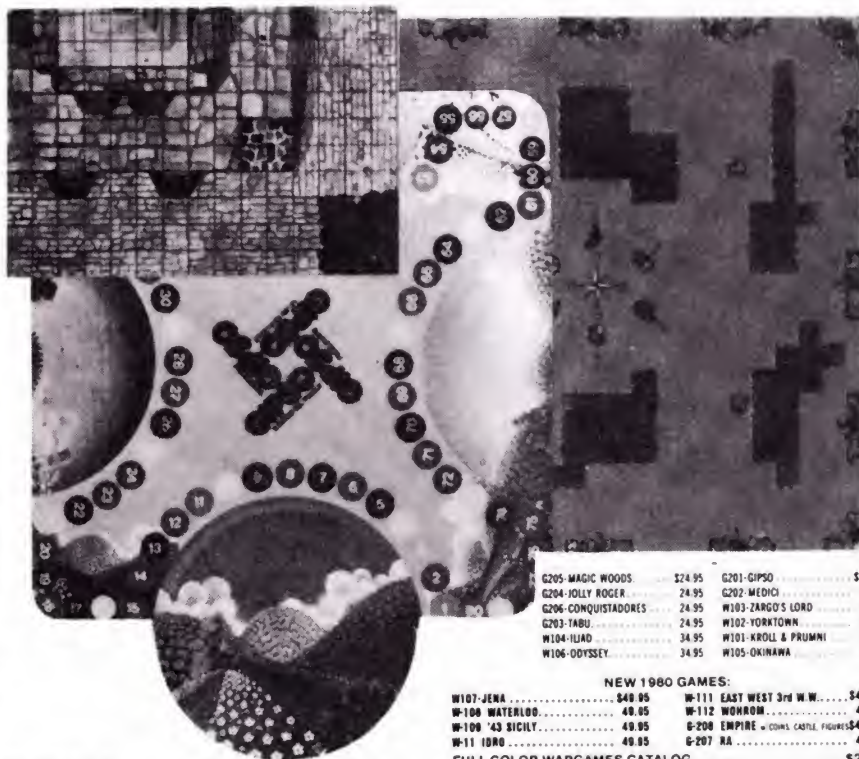
Rick's "Light Explorer with Scout" is on display at Gateway model shop in N.Y.C.

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scale into one of the more common aircraft model scales, such as 1/72nd and 1/48th. What came out at the other end was of heroic proportions indeed.

His two cruisers, converted from the 2001 PanAm Clippers, about 14 inches long in the model, would have come in at 332.5 prototype feet. This would have made a four and a half foot model in 1/72nd scale, while a 1/48th scale job would have run almost seven feet long!

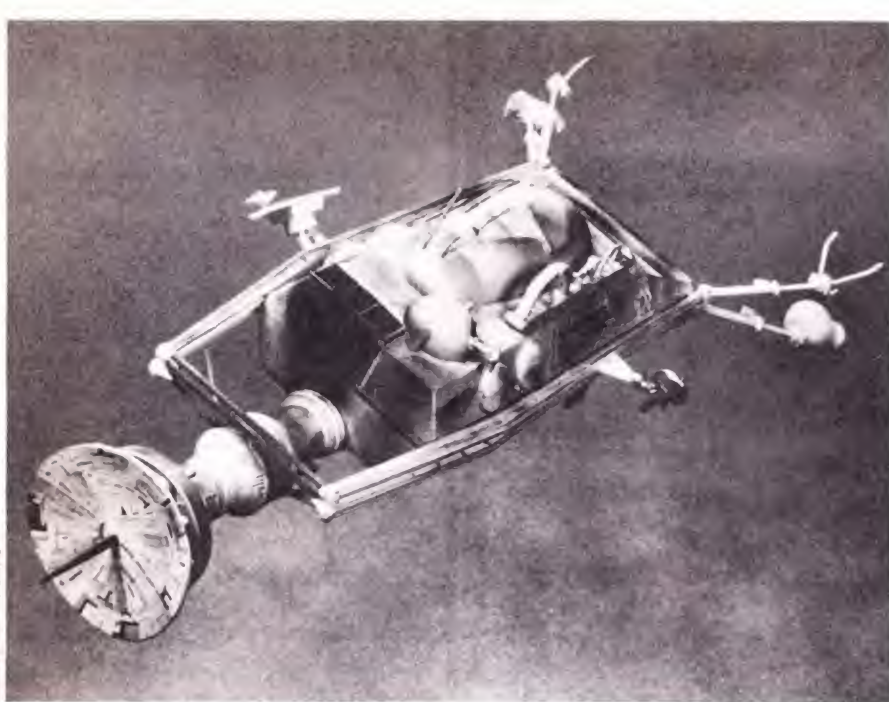
Obviously, 1/285th would work only for the smaller types. When it comes to the inter-galactic behemoths such as *Star War's Deathstar* or *Battlestar Galactica*, these would have to be made on a much smaller scale. Just how much smaller is still a moot point.

In real life, such ships would be



PHOTO JOHN CLAYTON

Rick's design for the Nautilus, the ship from *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, is modified from AMT's Romulan ship kit.



Another of Overton's display pieces at Gateway. The parabolic dish is cardboard

assembled in orbit and traffic with planetary surfaces would be handled entirely by shuttle. This, of course, is not a new idea but a very old one operating in a new medium. In the days before harbors were dredged and docking facilities were built, the big sea-going ships did most of their ship-to-shore business by boat. Even cargos were taken on and discharged by barges and lighters. This is still the way it's done today in more places than most people imagine.

With no atmosphere and planetary gravities to contend with, we still do not have any clear cut ideas as to just where the practical limits of a deep spacer built in orbit will lie. And limits there will probably be, even if we do keep them beyond the reaches of planetary gravities.

When I raised the point with Rick, he was quick to point out that *Star Trek's Enterprise* was supposed to have entered a planetary atmosphere. But I argued back that if it did, it must have been a very small planet, considerably less than one-g. For one thing, I have never really bought the design concept of the *Enterprise*. One the one hand, she exhibits all of the streamlined sleekness of a suborbital flying machine. On the other, her overall design elements make me wonder. When I look at her mass in terms of inertia and statics, I get the willies. Even a 15 degree turn to port or starboard would have to be done very, very gently, eating up a lot of space, say a galaxy or two. I always get the feeling that if she got the full whammy of even a one-g planet like good old Earth, she stood a good chance of having her tail bent out

of shape in at least two, if not three, places.

"What about anti-gravity devices?" Rick shot back with a grin.

"That's about in last place on my list

of bed-time prayers," I replied.

Indeed, I feel about gravity as I feel about the Cosmos: Don't fool around with it. It's one of the laws of nature. Like magnetism, electricity, action and reaction, etc., etc., etc. They have all existed long before man learned to recognize them and put them to use. Nor was their natural occurrence or absence harmful to man, unless he happened to be struck by a bolt of lightning or something like that. But on the day we discover a natural occurrence of anti-gravity, we will have no more time to study it than it will take for this phenomenon to asphyxiate us while we go flying into space along with our atmosphere. No. All we have learned to do with gravity is to cheat it in very small and crude ways. Still, the refinement of Newton's Law of Action and Reaction, from the steam engine to the powerplant of a first-stage rocket at Cape Kennedy, does represent a giant step for mankind. But see how much it takes to overpower so comparatively little gravity like a one-ton payload.

For all these reasons the matter of size and, therefore of scale, is still very much up in the air—or should I say space? At least, the answer I got from Rick Overton wasn't nearly so clear cut and definite as the 1/285th for the smaller units.

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What would be a good scale? That depends very much on the view you have of the prototypes. Since we are still Earthbound in all but our imagination, it might be helpful to begin with some Earthbound parameters. Here, an educated guess can be far more rewarding than mere idle speculation. Look, for example, at the Navy. They do now pretty much what we may someday expect to do in space. They merely do it in a different environment. But once you have figured out the difference in purpose between, say a cruiser and an aircraft carrier, and what each one of the 1,000 crewmen in the former and the 4,000 in the latter do, you have a realistic starting point. Take into account space age powerplants, technology, weaponry and how far away from home base your battleship will be expected to operate and your behemoth will slowly begin to take shape in your mind's eye.

This, then, is the mark of scratch-builders, kitbashers and converters like Rick Overton. Although they give free rein to the fantasy and imagination, they never lose sight of functionalism. This, in turn, brings on a degree of realism. And although the terms 'fantasy' and 'realism' might appear to be mutually exclusive, this is not really so. Since the year one, realism has been the mark of the good science fiction book just as, to the modelmaker, it can mark the difference between an outlandish apparition and a solid conversation piece.

FANTASY MODELING has just learned from the laboratories and assembly plant of the Overton Sub-Urban Trolley Company, that its latest creation, a Victorian spaceship, named *Now what, Voyager?* is ready to embark on another big step for mankind. Noted stage and screen star, Ms. Bette Davis will preside over the launching ceremony just as soon as the Overton engineers can determine where and how she is to break a plastic magnum of

One of Rick's many victorian spaceships, the "Now what, Voyager?" is dedicated to fellow modeler Michael Sullivan.



Mountain Dew for the christening.

An official statement made to representatives of the press indicates that the power plant is designed around an ion engine and anti-gravity plates. However, a close examination of the official photographs released with the statement reveals that in addition to the Plastruct shapes, as well as diverse tank and truck parts, the windows in the command module appear to be made of (empty?) speed capsules, thus providing a hint about the true nature of the power plant.

It is further rumored that, according to an unimpeachable source close to the hex room of the Overton House, escape velocity for the *Now what, Voyager?* will be achieved by means of a 1,986 foot slingshot designed by a Southern California consortium known as Nebulous Concepts Ltd.

Although no information was included in the official handout, FANTASY MODELING has also learned that the interior of the *Now what, Voyager?* was originally designed to accommodate a crew of 12 humanoids, 2 cows, 4 goats, 2 dogs, 3 cats and a parakeet in all the comforts of home. This, however, is said to be under current revision as another Southern California consortium, headed by Miss Piggy, has expressed an interest in purchasing this latest spaceship for that pace setter in ultimate realism in science-fiction television: 'Pigs in Space.'

PHOTO PHILIP STEARNS

△

△



PHOTO PHILIP STEARNS

"Awaiting Rescue," Overton's diorama of stranded space explorers, shows the crew of a wrecked spaceship playing golf.

WAR GAMES



The greatest fantasy of them all—be the empire led by Napoleon or Darth Vader, when the adventure gamers change the course of history they indulge in the greatest fantasy of them all

By MIKE KILBERT

Welcome to the World of Gaming. The appearance of this magazine means two things—you're getting into gaming and there are more companies coming out with more products than ever before. There was a time, only a few years ago, when gamers had very little choice. Now there are so many things to see and try, that the variety is staggering. This column will try to follow the change so that you will have a clearer picture of what is available and what is happening in this industry as it effects you.

A good starting point would be a description of the three broad categories of which the field is composed. Of course there is some crossover where a product may be in two or three categories; and some products don't quite fit any category, but on the whole these areas are rather distinctive. Try all of them, they're all part of the hobby.

BOARDGAMES: One of the oldest forms of gaming. They're called board games because they include some sort of playing surface on which to move your pieces. Sometimes it will be a map

A Naval war game created for Valiant Miniatures by Shepherd Paine.

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All the requirements for a military war game.

of a battlefield for an historical game, or it will be a sector of a galaxy for a science-fiction game, a part of an ocean for a naval game, or a map of a castle for a fantasy game. *The pieces:* Usually little cardboard squares called counters. The rules for these games can be simpler than Parcheesi, or so complex that it could take over ten hours to learn. *The Choice:* Anything from prehistoric times through the wars of the past, to the far future through science-fiction and fantasy.

MINIATURES: All different sizes, all different poses, all different types. Paint them, collect them, use them in games, use them in dioramas or scenes. Look at the cover of the magazine, that should give you some ideas. The standard sizes are: 15mm (most figures about ½ inch tall), 25mm (about one inch tall), 54mm (approximately 2½ inches tall), 75-77mm (three to 3½ inches tall). All of these scales are based on a standing male figure, of course a man on horseback will be taller and a dwarf will be shorter. But the standard size gives you some idea. You can usually take a 25mm figure from one manufacturer and put it in a scene with a 25mm figure from another manufacturer).

No matter how they're being used, painting the miniatures is a part of it. Whether you're putting together a war game army of 200 figures or just creating a scene with five miniatures and some trees, the painting of the figures should be more than half of the job and also more than half of the satisfaction. Anyone can buy a lead miniature, only you can paint it the way you like.

Don't be afraid to pick up a brush and try your hand at painting. It's pretty hard to make a mistake, after all it is a form of art. Did you ever hear of someone looking at a painting and saying that the artist was wrong? In the future we'll have "how-to" articles that will help you get started. Keep in mind that painting miniatures is one of those things where the more you do it, the better you'll get. Don't be hesitant about experimenting—it helps to improve your technique.

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES: If you're reading this magazine, then you probably already know what is meant by a role-playing game. Even so, let's see if we're all talking about the same thing. When you were younger and somebody bought you a game, you knew what it was without opening it. All you had to do was shake that long, thin package that you got from Aunt Martha. You could hear the board, the dice and the little plastic pieces sloshing around. After you played it three or four times, you got tired of moving your blue piece around the board in circles. Sure Monopoly was different, it had money and you could buy properties. But that also got thrown in the back of the closet

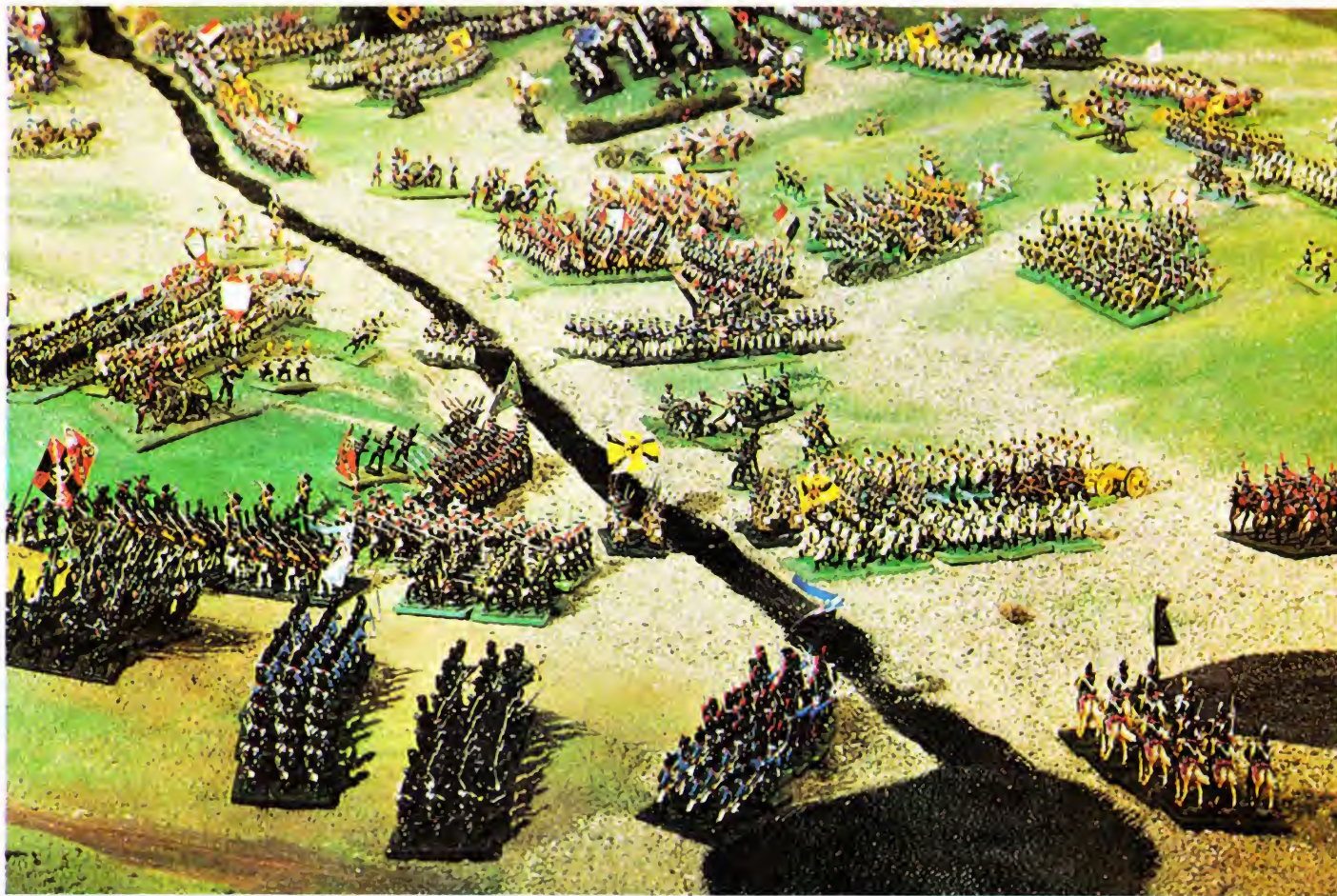


PHOTO PHILIP O. STEARNS

A massive display of painted 25 mm. war games figures by Peter Guilder of Hinchliffe models.

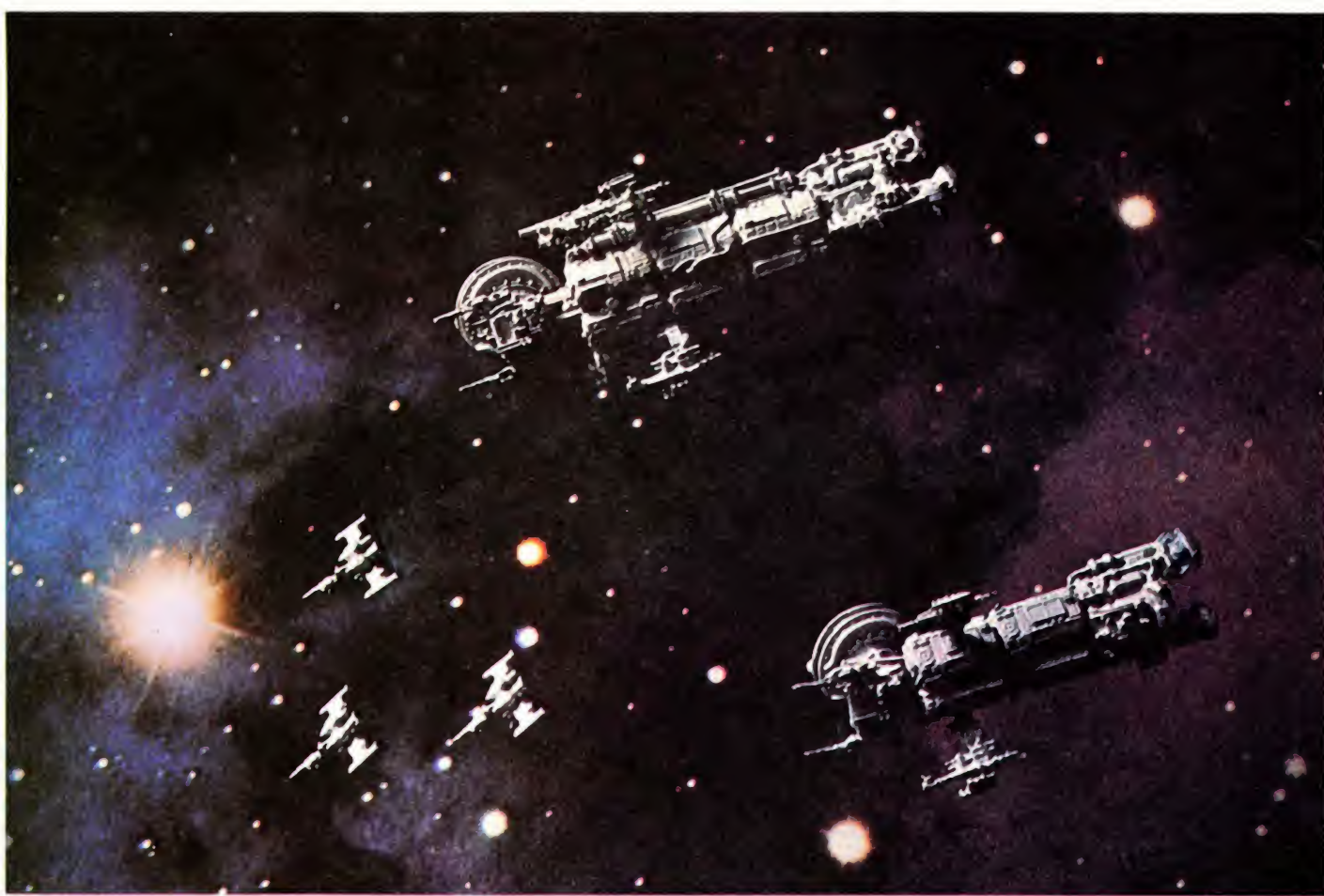
after a few plays. You never seemed to find a game to keep you interested, a game that didn't involve racing around the board and avoiding certain spaces.

The kind of game you wanted just wasn't being made. You were looking for something that was always different, always changing. Some game

that didn't depend completely on a few lucky rolls of the dice. And that's what intrigued you about role-playing games. It wasn't just a board in a box, it



PHOTO PHILIP O. STEARNS



Peter Guilder demonstrates his painting skills with his Napoleonic artillery team.

was an adventure, an adventure in your mind.

There is a basic formula to any role-playing game but after that, it's any-

thing goes. You choose your character—the person or thing that you want to be in the that game. Add to your character certain qualities like

strength, intelligence, leadership, health, etc., and you're ready to go. The person that runs the adventure (it's more than game), let's call him the gamemaster, presents you and the other players with the adventure that he has created. You and the other players must overcome all obstacles that he throws in your way so that you can achieve some goal. As in real-life there are traps along the way, there are helping hands, there is the unknown.

Why are these games so popular? Some people say it's because there are no real challenges left in the world today. Other people think that its popularity has to do with the idea that there are no winners or losers—just the satisfaction of doing well. Since most adventures involve the players as a group, many people feel that the social interaction adds to the popularity. Some say it's a basic fascination with fantasy, science-fiction, another time, another place. Whatever the reason, join the crowd; you won't be disappointed.

Don't forget to check the new products section—let it be a guide. It will help you to decide what you want; but remember it is only a guide. How you spend your money is your decision.

One last thing, this column should reflect the readership. Write to me if you like it, if you don't like it, if I missed it, if I'm wrong. But write. We're here for YOU. Δ



Another of Shepherd Paine's superb miniature ship models for Valiant.

Fantasy battle stars created for Valiant Miniatures by Shepherd Paine.

BOOK REVIEWS



BARLOWE'S GUIDE TO EXTRA-TERRESTRIALS. Wayne Douglas Barlowe and Ian Summers. Workman Publishing Co., Inc. 1 West 39th Street, New York City, New York 10018 \$7.95

This marvelously funny and imaginatively illustrated book is an absolute must to anyone even remotely interested in the world of Science Fiction and Fantasy. These two clever young men have delved into a large variety of sci-fi novels and prepared a visual representation of highly-imaginative outworld creatures. Barlowe's artistry is certainly among the most creative and fresh seen to date and Summers' descriptions of physical characteristics, habitat and culture are wonderfully complimentary to those splendid illustrations. Their whole approach is so convincingly realistic that one begins to know what to expect from future trips into outer space. Personally, I know that Douglas Barlowe has seen these Thypes, Mersians, Gowachins and others because he makes be a believer. Whatever you believe or would like to, you must not, under any circumstances, miss this most exquisite trip into a hitherto unknown world. You will return a richer and wiser person.

PHILIP O. STEARNS

The ETV Model Book by Robert Schleicher. Chilton, Radnor, PA. 1979. (\$7.95)

That space modelling is coming of age is proven by the appearance of yet another title addressing itself to this specialty.

At the same time, this attractive little book also serves notice that "plastics in space" will not be quite the same as "plastics on Earth." Generally a book on tanks, aircraft or model soldiers will *The Space Travellers Handbook* by Michael Freeman, Sovereign, New York, 1979. (About \$10.00.)

It has become a curious aspect of the hardcover book industry that many new specialty titles don't seem to catch

the public's eye until they appear as "remainders" in a discount house. Or is it, perhaps, that the discount houses are beginning to take the play away from an ever diminishing number of bookstores? A case in point is furnished by *The Space Traveller's Handbook*, a splendid admixture of fact and fantasy, of science and fiction.

Put together as a would-be instruction manual for potential space travelers in the year 2061, the author furnishes a splendidly illustrated overview of the state of the science as it exists in our time and then proceeds to take the reader a few big steps beyond. The technical drawings are superb and should furnish a source for inspiration to every modeller. However, even the reader who is not interested in modelling will come up with a lot of interesting information like, for example, a lesson in 3-D astro navigation.

This book is a treasure for the space reader, no matter where his specialized interests might lie because it strikes a wonderful balance between being both informative and entertaining.

R.K. RIEHN

Images from Space, The Camera in Orbit, compiled by H.J.P. Arnold, EP Dutton, 1979. (\$12.50)

This is a folio-sized recap of some of the most spectacular space shots that have come along over the years. And even though the emphasis is on the dramatic, the modeller will find some good shots among the 64 plates that make up this handsome book. However, after all is said and done, if you are a space buff, here is a chance to do something for the walls of your den or even living room, if you are so inclined. Properly matted and mounted in a simple frame of brushed metal, any one or two are well worth the price of the book. Some of the plates run to the full 11" by 15" format. Visual goodies like this don't come along all too often.

R.K. RIEHN

simply carry a copyright line in its own

behalf. Not so here. In addition to the expected, there are no fewer than fifteen lines devoted to copyrights and trademarks, covering the creations of the motion picture and television industry like a blanket. There is a message here. I don't think that any plastics manufacturer ever paid Uncle Sam a royalty for reproducing his Sherman Tank or Polaris Submarine, to name just two out of hundreds; but they're dealing with civilians now. So it seems to me, if the men from Plasticsville want to keep up their profit margins, they had better start putting on their thinking caps and come up with ideas of their own.

Now, to the book itself. Although much of the mechanics of plastics modelling has appeared in other "how-to" books, the author was quite correct in making his work complete and self-contained. What is new here is a plethora of suggestions not only on space vehicles, but on support craft as well, right down to ground effect vehicles. There is also a section on actual flying rockets and the instrumentation necessary to track them. Last, but not least, is a fine chapter on kit bashing and freelancing. In view of the relatively limited range of kits on the market at this time, this is a most important feature of the book. Here, perhaps more than in any other field of plastic modelling, the kitbashers may very well be the new wave of the future. The model railroaders, for example, have been benefiting from this for years. There the best efforts of the freelancers often attract the attention of the kit manufacturers.

With his *Battle Corvette Nebula*, the author introduces an entire integrated concept which culminates in the *Battle Carrier Roo*,—all utilizing the Petal Class Fighters which, in their bays, form part of the motherships. And, whether or not the Petal fighter may appeal to every modeller, the concept is interesting and should start scores of scratch builders to embark in a new direction.

So get with it, modellers. Start freelancing. Don't wait until the boys in Hollywood lay another freaked out machine on you. There are more of you than there are of them. All it takes is a little independent thinking, some ingenuity and a copy of the *ETV Model Book* (the ETV stands for 'Extraterrestrial Vehicles'). With a little practice and a good guidebook such as this one, most any reader should be able to build his creative ideas to escape velocity. Tennis anyone?

R.K. RIEHN

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COLLECTABLE

As this is a new magazine, we will give just a short retrospect as to some of the products and manufacturers you will find in the stores today. Some of these figures are new and some have been around for a while but all are representative of the best in the field.

Starting with the largest in scale, Superior Models Inc. produce a fine 90mm-line of fantasy figures most of which have been sculpted by Ray Lamb (American); there is a British one as well. These include many well known characters such as Conan, John Carter of Mars and many others.



Monarch Miniatures Inc. have been most active in this field with the sculpting of England's Cliff Sanderson whose flights of imagination all well known to other manufacturers.

Heritage Models Inc. once again have used the talents of Sanderson to produce a line of 75mm-Tolkien figures.



Valiant Miniatures Inc. not only produces its own 54mm-figures, but have acquired the rights to refurbish and produce the former Squadron/Rubin line also. They are among the best produced here in America.

Greenwood and Ball Ltd. are a British firm which also uses Cliff Sanderson extensively as can be seen in the illustrations.



Grenadier Models Inc., best known for its 25mm-Dungeons and Dragons line, have recently launched a 77mm-line of fantasy figures in conjunction with artist Boris Vallejo.





Phoenix Model Developments of England have been very active with its Atlantis line. Here, the latest releases.



Imrie-Riseley Miniatures Inc. have delved into fantasy with its King Arthur series. Pictured are Merlin and Guinevere.



Although I am told these are no longer produced, some stores may still carry classic miniature's Firedraek line. I found the Centaur and Minotaur very effective as well as the Magician casting a spell over a Medusa-like creature rising from a pond and a well-rendered Grim Reaper.



Little Generals Miniatures have given us a very well-sculpted Venusian Camel Corps Officer and his Beast.



All considered, one can see that in the collector field there exists a wide variety of choice in figures which present the opportunity to paint, create dioramas or even use for Role Playing games. I foresee that an even greater range of this type of material will be forthcoming particularly with the emphasis that television and films are placing on the world of fantasy.

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ADVENTURES IN GAMING

By MIKE KILBERT

Adventure gaming has something for everyone. It does not matter whether you are a gamer, a miniaturist or a role player, there will always be a fantasy to suit yours. Whether you enjoy the visual thrill of setting up a beautiful painted army or just the thrill of matching your wits against your opponents, whether you are in outer space approaching a distant planet or rescuing an enslaved maiden, whether you are Napoleon or Caesar, none of these matter as long as you are using your brains and talent at the same time. So in this column we will try to keep you abreast of all that's new in the gaming field, be it figures, board games, role playing games or publications or sets of rules. Should you find some unknown materials that may have escaped our attention, do write to us so that we can keep every reader up to date. As we have said before, this is *your* publication and therefore we need your help to make it what you want it to be.



Use this photo as a reference for the scale of miniatures. From left to right:

MINIFIGS—a 54 mm English Civil War musketeer
HERITAGE—a 25 mm cowboy
MARTIAN METALS—15mm Space Pirate

You should be aware that scale affects lead miniatures in many ways.

1. The larger the figure, the more expensive it will be.
2. The smaller the figure, the less detail it will usually have.
3. The larger the figure, the harder it will be to paint since it will require more detail work.
4. Beginners should choose 25 mm as a starting point. 15 mm requires a fine technique that must be developed and 54 mm is just too expensive to be used as practice pieces.
5. You will find the greatest possible selection in the 25 mm range. Eventually 15 mm may surpass it, but at present there are more companies casting in 25 mm.



Two of the newest entries into the SF and fantasy field. DRAGONQUEST a "second-generation" fantasy role-playing game and TIMESTRIPPER about a soldier(s) that travels back and forth through time to do battle with weapons on hand in Viet Nam.



Sci-fi and fantasy buffs should look into ARES magazine from Simulations Publications. Short stories, game reviews/reports and a complete game in every issue.

Left and right side views of a warrior riding his lizard into battle. From the Ral Partha 25mm ES fantasy range.



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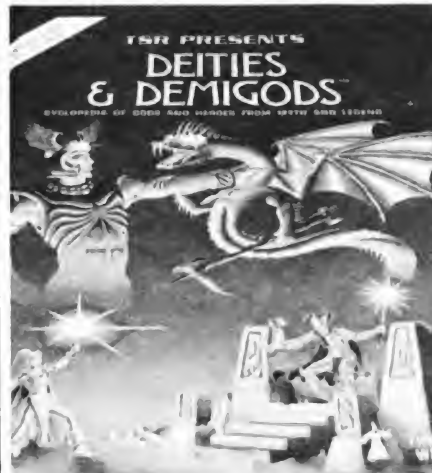


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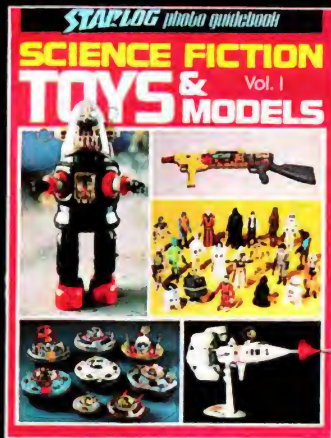


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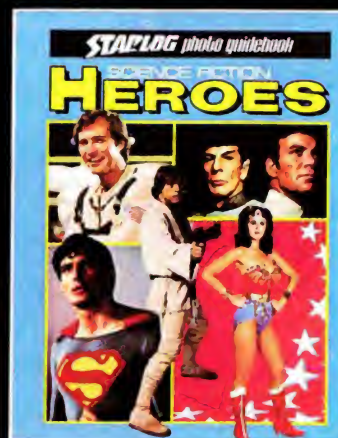
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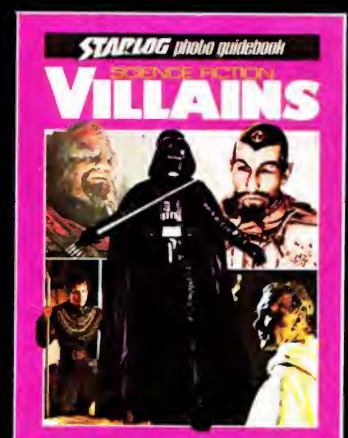
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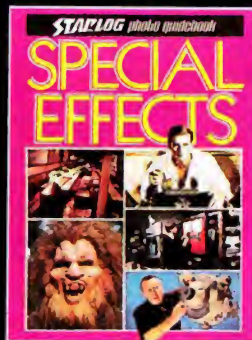


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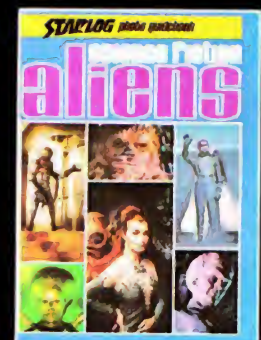
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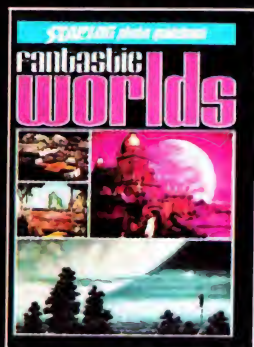
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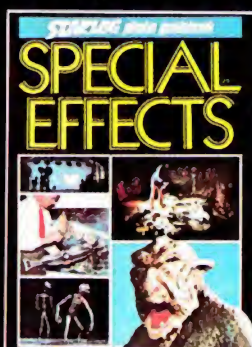
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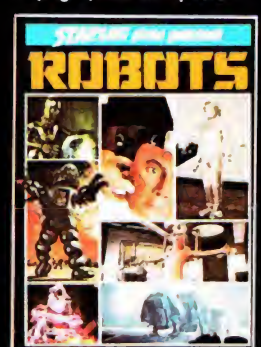
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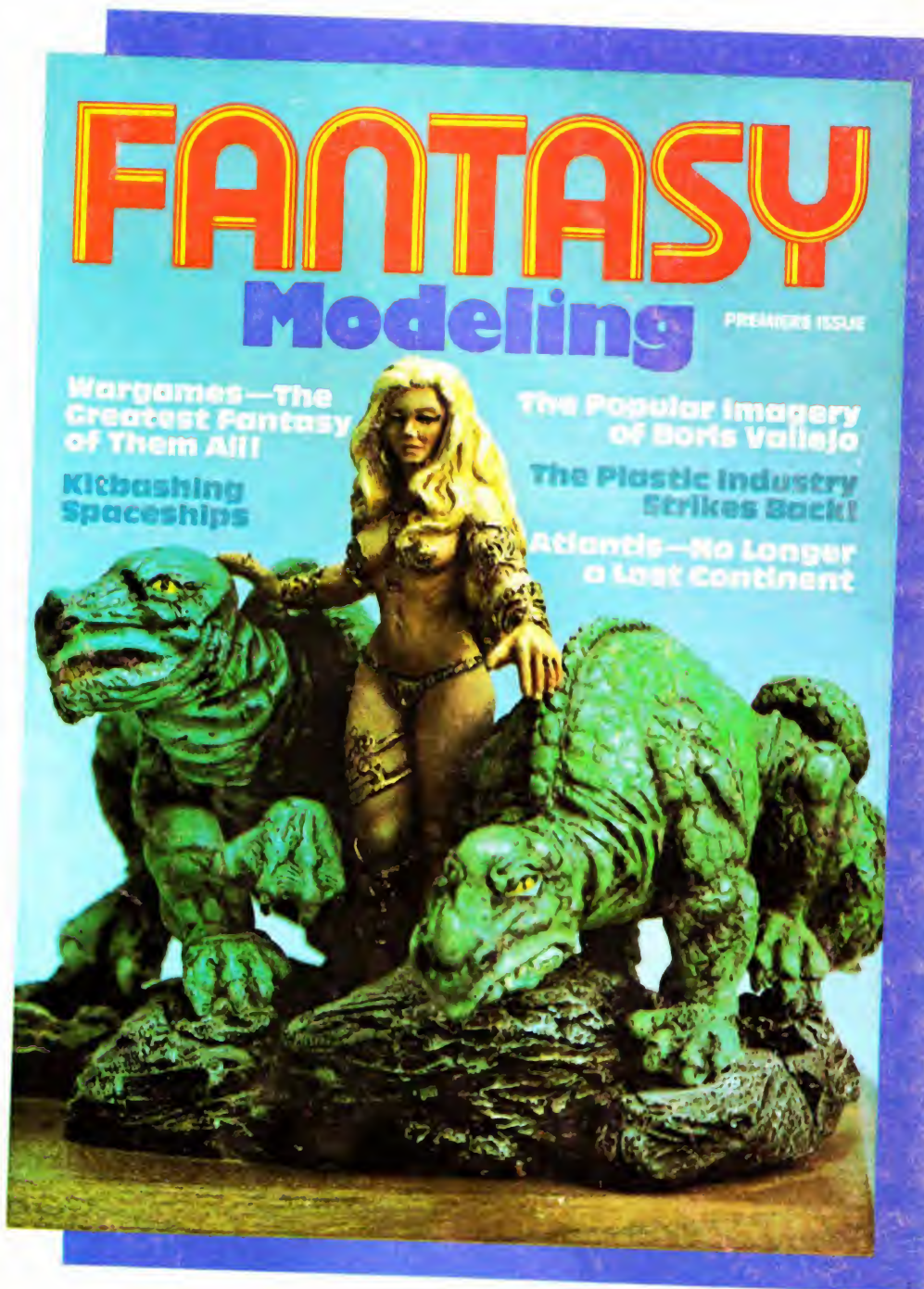
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